

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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METHAMPHETAMINE INDICTMENT RETURNED

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on April 18, 2006, a Federal Grand Jury returned an indictment charging **MARK E. MALONE**, age 35, of Springerton, Illinois, and **GINGER G. PHILLIPS**, age 34, of Enfield Illinois, with conspiracy to manufacture, distribute, and posses with intent to distribute over 500 grams of methamphetamine in White and Wayne Counties and elsewhere in the United States. The indictment alleges the offense occurred between January 2000 and continued up to the date of the indictment.

An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The charge carries a penalty of a minimum term of imprisonment of 10 years and up to life imprisonment, up to a \$4 million fine, and a term of at least 5 years' supervised release to follow incarceration.

The indictment was unsealed after MALONE and PHILLIPS were arrested on federal arrest warrants Thursday morning in a pre-dawn sweep. Both appeared in United States District Court in Benton today to be arraigned on the charges. MALONE and PHILLIPS were remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal pending individual detention hearings which are set for Wednesday, May 3, 2006.

The investigation leading to the charges was led by the Carmi office of the Southern Illinois Drug Task Force with the assistance of the Illinois State Police, the White County Sheriff's Office, the Fairfield Police Department, the Carmi Police Department, the White County State's Attorney's Office, the Wayne County State's Attorney's Office, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys James M. Cutchin.